

IN THE CLAIMS  
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Please amend claims 1, 26, and 29 as follows:

1. (Amended) A method comprising:  
selecting an elliptic curve method;  
executing a point modification algorithm to manipulate points  
of the elliptic curve method,  
wherein the point modification algorithm includes at least  
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one occurrence of point fractioning;  
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generating a signal having a distinct characteristic using  
the selected elliptic curve method;  
providing substantive content; and  
manipulating the substantive content using the distinct  
characteristic.

26. (Amended) An apparatus comprising:  
a system for creating a distinct characteristic configured to  
support cryptographic manipulation of information;  
a memory device operably connected to the system for storing  
the distinct characteristic and executables programmed to  
operate on the distinct characteristic;  
an encrypting device operably connected to the system for  
controlling an encryption process using the distinct  
characteristic;  
the system further configured to execute an elliptic curve  
method for generating the distinct characteristic; and  
the system further configured to execute a point modification  
algorithm for generating the distinct characteristic,  
wherein the point modification algorithm includes at least  
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one occurrence of point fractioning.  
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29. (Amended) An article comprising a computer-readable memory storing operational and executable data, the operational and executable data comprising:  
an encryption engine for operating on distinct characteristics configured to encrypt substantive content representing information;  
the encryption engine, further comprising a distinct characteristic generation module for operating on the distinct characteristics;  
the distinct characteristic generation module, further comprising an elliptic curve module for providing the distinct characteristics; and  
the elliptic curve module, further comprising a point modification algorithm for calculating points related to the distinct characteristic,  
wherein the point modification algorithm includes at least  
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one occurrence of point fractioning.  
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